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### UNH Research: People Who Know Their People Skills Are Open and Conscientious

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# NEWSROOM

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# UNH Research: People Who Know Their People Skills Are Open and Conscientious

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/RESEARCH/PEOPLE-WHO-KNOW-THEIR-PEOPLE-SKILLS-ARE-OPEN-AND-CONSCIENTIOUS)

DURHAM, N.H.—Research from the University of New Hampshire found that people who are more accurate in estimating their people skills, while perhaps not as enthusiastic, emotionally positive and sociable as people who overestimate their skills, have a better understanding of themselves and those around them and may make better friends, partners or bosses.

“In hiring, dating or simply seeking guidance we are drawn to confident people, those who seem to know what they’re doing, are encouraging to other people, and think highly of themselves,” says John Mayer, professor of psychology. “But sometimes the less confident or socially dull-seeming person has a better sense of their own skill-set at understanding other people and tend to be to more dutiful and responsible.”

In their study (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jopy.12561>), recently published in the Journal of Personality, researchers examined three archival studies that objectively measured personal intelligence, known as the ability to reason about personality differences, as a mental ability. When they compared peoples’ self-estimates to their actual ability levels, they found a number of people inflated their estimation of their personal intelligence relative to their actual ability level. Those who accurately assessed personal intelligence measured higher in verbal intelligence and were more interested in doing the right thing than others.

“Our bottom-line finding was that people who are more accurate in their self-assessment tend to have higher verbal skills and personal intelligence, but also are higher than usual in a few other qualities,” he says. “Chiefly, and this came as a surprise to us, they’re conscientious. They are dutiful and responsible. We think they’re more open and therefore more attuned to other peoples’ feedback.”

Mayer’s co-authors were A.T. Panter of the University of North Carolina and David Caruso of Yale University.

**MEDIA RELATIONS**

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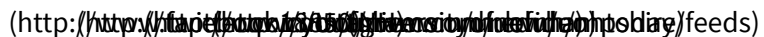
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